

New mission: Force

By SrA. Lisa Krebs
Public affairs

Air Force security police units were officially designated "security forces" units July 1, reflecting a new emphasis on their mission of force protection as part of the Air Force core competency of agile combat support.

Also, a career field merger will take effect Oct. 1, combining combat arms training and maintenance, law enforcement and security into the security force career field.

Even though this is a major change for the affected career fields, people stationed at RAF Lakenheath won't see much of a difference aside from new uniforms and reading "security forces," and maybe some new duties as people who primarily worked security start being tasked with law enforcement duties, such as patrolling and gate guards, said to CMSgt. Danny Stover, 48th SFS security force manager.

The only time security forces members were called security police is when they are performing military police missions, such as patrols, according to Stover.

"The mission has evolved over the years, and the new name fits the mission," he explained. "We have evolved into a security force. The people will still be doing the patrols doing what they have always done, and they will still be gate guards and troops at all the security control points. The faces may have changed, but the duties will remain the same."

The change will be vast for people working in the security forces career fields. While the mission has evolved over the years, a separation between law enforcement and security existed within the security police career field, and combat arms was a separate entity not under the control of security police. Now, united under the new name, "security forces," it offers many individuals new opportunities and affects everyone involved.

Now, each security forces member will be trained in all three areas.

"Tech schools will be longer, and every career field member (of the SP and LE career fields) has a year to complete a self-paced training program," said SFC Robert Wiles, 48th SFS security forces operations superintendent. "It's a good thing to do. It'll make a lot of people happy, and in the long run will benefit everyone."

Stover said the emphasis internally will be on training.

"Air base defense forces are trained to be prepared for every eventuality," he said. "Since the Cold War ended, our mission has evolved from more than just defending an air base from an air attack from Eastern Bloc nations."

And the new name fits more of what the SFS is really about, he added.

"There will be a bigger forces push in the future," emphasized Wiles. "Security forces are trained for anti-terrorism -- protecting people from that threat."



protection

The responsibilities of security forces includes peacekeeping missions, humanitarian missions, regional conflicts and air base ground defense.”

A new career field education and training plan is in development now, according to CMSgt. Daryl Janicki, Air Force Security Forces Manager. The plan merges, expands and improves current security police training programs for present and future security force members, and will produce people who can perform in any area of the security forces mission.

At the Air Force level, security forces groups will also include other career fields necessary for the security forces mission, explained Stover and Wiles. This includes civil engineering, explosive ordnance disposal, communications, intelligence, logistics, transportation and medical representatives. This provides a group of people designated and prepared to respond quickly anywhere in the world as a security forces team, though the non-SFS career fields won't wear the SFS badge.

“We've been security police for 19 years and it's sad sometimes to see things go,” said Wiles. “But things change, and the mission's changed and evolved. Merging the career fields has been suggested before over the years and now that it's happening, it's happening fast.”



Photos by TSgt. Sam Shore

Left, A1C Jeffrey Burbank stands guard during an exercise. Above, A1C Chris Dawson prepares to issue an M-16 at the armory.

A look back at history

□ Upon establishment of the U.S. Air Force in 1947, military police (MP) units serving with the Army Air Corps were transferred to the USAF.

□ General Order No. 1, HQ USAF, Jan. 2, 1948, designated all MP units and personnel as “Air Police.” Also established the “Air Provost Marshal.”

□ In the Korean conflict, APs in police role were usually the only armed fighting force on the base. Forward bases being overrun led to development of air base defense capability.

□ After Korea, focus was on security of cold war nuclear forces. In 1960, the name “Air Provost Marshall” was changed to “Director of Security and Law Enforcement.”

□ In 1966 the career field name was changed to “Security Police,” considered more descriptive of the two main mission elements — police and security forces.

□ In Vietnam, the need for external base defense led to specially trained and equipped units: the 1041st Security Police Squadron and, in 1968 after the Tet Offensive, the 82nd Combat Security Police Wing. These units wore the original blue berets.

□ In January 1971 the career field was divided into the law enforcement and security career fields. In November 1971, the first enlisted women entered the law enforcement career field.

□ In 1973, women officers were assigned to Security Police duties.

□ 1976, current blue beret authorized.

□ 1977 to 1978 a test was conducted of enlisted women in the security career field. However, the field remained closed because of combat restrictions until Jan. 1, 1985.

□ Post Cold War — Emphasis on rapid deployment of force protection forces in support of Air Expeditionary Forces.

□ July 1, 1997, security police units re-designated as “Security Forces” units.

□ On October 31, 1997, the security, law enforcement and combat arms training and maintenance career fields will be merged into the security forces career field. Emphasis will be on force protection.

On the cover

Changing with the times, SrA. Jerome Jones (left) and SrA. Stephen Arbona, 48th Security Forces provide force protection alongside the Punisher. The Punisher is a one of a kind HUMVEE mounted with remote controlled M16s (with silencers) and thermal imaging.

Photo by SrA. Jeff Capenos